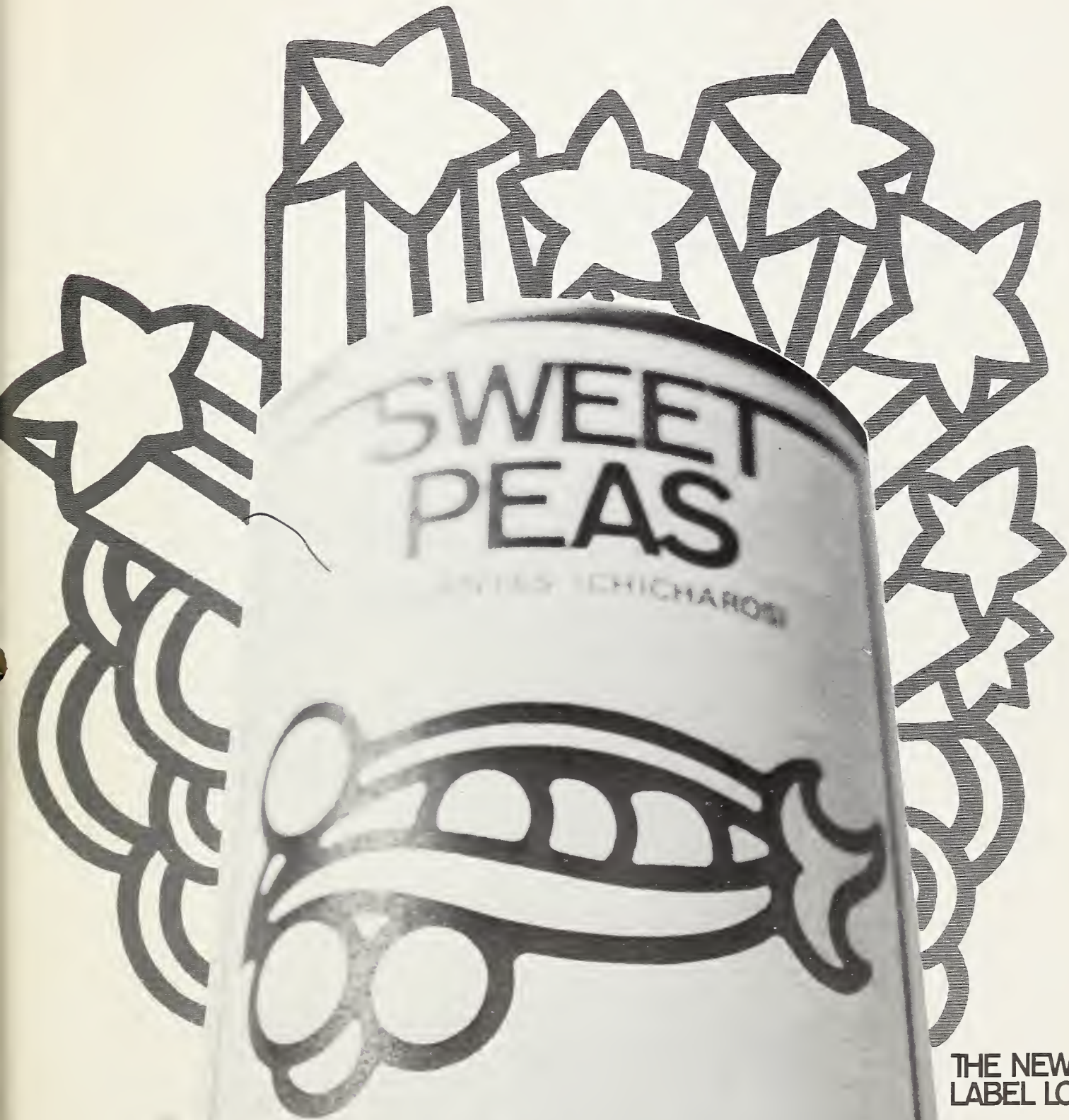


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Challenges of Feeding CHILDREN

*By Richard Lyng
Assistant Secretary*

In MAY 1970 CONGRESS passed landmark legislation to improve and expand child nutrition programs. This legislation for the first time called for national income standards to determine which children needed free or reduced-price lunches. And more than that, it set a high priority on getting school lunches to all those youngsters found to be needy.

Thanks to the hard work and persistence of many people, coupled with broad-based public and Governmental support, the goal is now in

sight. In May 1972 we reached 8.1 million needy children with free and reduced-price lunches for the sixth consecutive month. That's more than double the 3.8 million we reached in May 1969.

Total school lunch program participation is hovering around the 25 million mark. The peak month this past school year was 25.4 million in December. It was only 22.1 million 3 years ago.

In 1969 we still had something approaching 25,000 schools without any food service at all, schools in which there seemed no way to provide meals to children whether they could pay or not. That year's meeting came shortly after America landed the first man on the moon and we were confronted with the obvious question: if we can feed people in a space capsule 200,000 miles above the earth, why can't we feed needy children in U.S. schools?

We were determined that American technological genius would help find some answers. At the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health which met in late 1969, food industry leaders, scientists and technologists joined with school lunch leaders, nutritionists, and other experts to come up with a great many helpful suggestions and recommendations. Perhaps most important, the majority of those people went home determined to do something about it.

The technological improvements and suggestions came. Combined with innovative ideas and practical know-how, the results were an astonishing growth in the use of central and satellite kitchens, canned and frozen lunches, new and convenient foods. All of these and others helped in feeding children in schools that had never served food before. Those 25,000 schools without food service

in 1969 have now been cut to about 18,000. And we're making a major push right now to reduce that number.

The drive toward better nutrition for needy children called for rapid expansion of newer kinds of food service: school breakfasts to help youngsters refuel before morning classes; summer food service to fill in the lunch gap when school is out.

The number of children served breakfast at school has soared from 362,000 in 1969 to over one million in April 1972. The summer feeding program meanwhile reached as many as 2 million children this past season, which was 20 times the number in 1969, the first summer of operation.

The Federal contribution to the school lunch program has grown from about 24 percent in 1969, with aid mostly in donated foods, to nearly 40 percent this past school year, with by far the largest share of the aid in cash.

We now have a package of well-funded, workable child nutrition programs—plus a solid record of accomplishment on which to build. Where, then, are today's major challenges? What should we be trying to do?

Primary emphasis, it seems to me, has to be on getting food service started in the approximately 18,000 schools without any programs. We must put greater energy into an effort to give every child, whether needy or not, an opportunity to have a nutritious school lunch. The National Advisory Council on Child Nutrition has put this goal at the top of its priority list. We do not find it difficult to wholeheartedly agree.

We recognize that as the number of no-program schools gets smaller, it becomes increasingly difficult to complete this job. But bear in mind that

we have grown too—in terms of experience, technical know-how and ability to overcome such obstacles as old buildings and old attitudes. New technology opens many more options, many more ways to reach children with food service.

In setting priorities we must guard against focusing primarily on the needy school, thereby diverting our attention from our major concern—the needy child, no matter what or where his school. Our target must be all schools without food service, regardless of the relative poverty or affluence of the neighborhood. We must focus upon the child who is not receiving a nutritious lunch at school.

Along with providing food, it's our job to see that the child who gets a free or reduced-price lunch isn't embarrassed by having his schoolmates know about it. Many schools have payment systems that do this job very well; others still have difficulty finding a plan that works. I am distressed at the large number of schools which do not seem to care about this problem. Schools that need help on this should not hesitate to contact the Food and Nutrition Service for details on a variety of simple, workable systems.

While the major focus of our efforts in recent years has been on reaching needy children with good school lunches, we need to pay more attention to a related but very important area of school feeding. This is the need to make school lunches sufficiently attractive so that children will want to participate.

Changing patterns of American food consumption suggest that we need to take an enlightened approach to menu planning—offering a wider variety of choices, appealing more to students at the high school level who form a steadily growing percentage

of our school-aged population. These youngsters want to make their own decisions. They refuse to eat something simply because someone says it's good for them. They offer a tremendous challenge for nutrition education programs and technical innovation.

Up until now there have been many theories and much hearsay as to what makes a high school lunch program run well—at a high level of student participation. There's an obvious need for objective information in this area. To help fill this gap in knowledge, the Food and Nutrition Service will, during the current school year, conduct a case study of food service in selected high schools to identify those factors which contribute to high participation as well as those which cause low participation. Among other things, we want to measure the effects of:

- ★ Nutrition knowledge among students.

- ★ Food choices tailored to current teenage lifestyle and interests.

- ★ Arrangement and decor of the lunchroom.

- ★ Length of lunch period.

Then we plan to set up 10 to 12 "sample schools" to test out some of the factors found to be pluses in encouraging student participation. We're open to suggestions from State and local school lunch leaders on a wide variety of approaches—music, new delivery systems, student panels—that might be tried in our search for ways to sell good nutrition to teenagers.

We are hopeful that out of this will come a set of practical guidelines which will be helpful to those working to strengthen the effectiveness of high school food service programs. This is among the real challenges facing all of us in this decade. ☆

time to eat in jersey city !!



"A MOTOR CAN'T run without gasoline and the human body can't run without food," says Conrad Vuocolo, Director of Tenant Relations for the Jersey City (N.J.) Housing Authority. Because he felt so strongly about this, Vuocolo decided 3½ years ago to do something about feeding the children of Jersey City.

The result is the Jersey City Housing Authority feeding program, the only public-housing-based child feeding program in the Nation.

In 1937 the Jersey City Housing Authority was founded to provide low-income families with safe, sanitary housing at rents commensurate with their incomes; it was one of the first anti-poverty agencies in the city.

The Housing Authority now administers nine projects with 15,000 tenants, 9700 of whom are children. Rent runs from \$17 to \$150 per month, depending on income. The second largest city in the State, Jersey City has a total population of 250,000.

Every day in the basements of nine public housing projects, the Housing Authority serves 4,000 children a free after-school snack. The Housing Authority kitchens are also used to prepare food for an OEO-sponsored Meals on Wheels program and for 55 children eating breakfast, lunch, and a snack at the New Jersey State Day Care Center in Montgomery Gardens. Last summer the Housing Authority served 5,000 breakfasts and 5,000 snacks a day to children par-

ticipating in its summer recreation programs.

The Housing Authority receives assistance from the FNS Special Food Service Program for Children, which in New Jersey is administered by the State Department of Education and the Department of Institutions and Agencies. USDA supplies donated foods and reimburses the Housing Authority 10 cents per snack. Without this help the feeding program could not exist.

One of the two State warehouses for USDA-donated foods is conveniently located in Jersey City. The Housing Authority uses its own trucks and maintenance staff to transport the food from this warehouse to where it's needed.

The program's staff includes volunteers, who are tenants and mothers from the public housing projects, and individuals paid under various manpower programs such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps and Operation Service, a senior citizens' work program funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. As sponsor, the Housing Authority takes care of administration and purchasing, using Youth Corps workers to do the accounting and bookkeeping. The Housing Authority hires as many tenants as possible to provide them with opportunities for job experience and training.

Two nutritionists work with the food service crew: Mrs. Betsy Langley, former director of the Hoboken school lunch program, who works full time with the program, and Mrs. Hannah Waterman, a city public health nutritionist, who serves as a consultant.

On a typical day with Director Vuocolo in a few housing projects, here's what happens:

At Hudson Gardens the wheels start grinding early and don't let up until dinnertime. In the morning the Meals on Wheels group uses the kitchen to prepare 130 meals, which are delivered to homebound elderly throughout the city.

At noon needy senior citizens may purchase hot lunches, prepared by the Housing Authority, for 35 cents. Workers include a lady from Operation Service, a youth corps teenager, and Mrs. Rose Fanizzi, a Youth Corps supervisor who serves as cook. At 3:30 p.m. the children come tumbling in for their after-school snacks.

At Montgomery Gardens Mrs. Vera Spiles and three members of Operation Service are working on oatmeal cookies for the afternoon snack and tutoring session.

The kitchen at Montgomery was put together from used equipment purchased from the Emerson Radio Company for \$85. "We do everything on a shoestring here," says Vuocolo. The oven cost \$600, 75 percent of which was reimbursed under USDA's Nonfood Assistance Program. The Housing Authority bought welding chairs (metal chairs resembling bar stools), and maintenance men trimmed the legs to make chairs for the smallest children. They also built



Working with the Emergency Employment Act program, Mrs. Francis Martin (left) helps bake cakes daily for the Jersey City Housing Authority's feeding program. The program serves 4,000 children a free after-school snack in the basements of nine public housing projects. On a visit to Montgomery Gardens (below), Conrad Vuocolo, head of the Housing Authority's Tenant Relations Office, meets with Mrs. Vera Spiles, the project's cook.



masonite tables. "This used to be an old ugly basement, but look at it now," Vuocolo beams.

Montgomery Gardens also houses a public school annex. According to Vuocolo, the Housing Authority is the first in the Nation to donate space in public housing for the use of a public school. There's also a well-stocked food cooperative in the project for the tenants.

At Currie's Woods, two mothers are busy baking for the afternoon cake and milk snack for 450 children. The two women, Vuocolo points out, have been doing this for 2 years but weren't paid until recently. They now receive salaries under the Emergency Employment Act and have been removed from the welfare rolls.

On the return trip to his Hudson Gardens office, Vuocolo outlines the major problems faced by the Housing Authority in the feeding program: thievery, rodents, flooding, and lack of space.

He also speaks of the philosophy behind the program: to reach the parents. The best way to do this, he feels, is to involve them directly; this is why the help of the great number of mothers and tenants in baking for the program is so significant.

The Housing Authority also distributes nutrition information to the kids, hoping that their parents will read it. Similarly, the Youth Corps teenagers who help run the summer recreation and feeding programs learn about nutrition.





IN THE WAKE OF THE FLOODS

Food Aids Thousands in South Dakota

AT LEAST 237 known dead, hundreds missing and untold millions in property damage.

Those brief statistics tell little of the suffering of residents of the small, tourist-oriented town of Rapid City, South Dakota, nestled in the Black Hills area near historic Mount Rushmore. After 7 inches of torrential rain, the earthen Canyon Lake Dam burst on June 9 and sent a torrent of water

down Rapid Creek, destroying everything in its path.

The disaster, which some Black Hills pioneer families called the worst in South Dakota's history, was the first of the raging June floods that victimized thousands in various parts of the country.

It was Friday night when the flood struck Rapid City, and by Saturday morning numerous private and government agencies were already working to provide relief.

The staff of the Food and Nutrition Service went to work immediately to see that the combined resources of the school lunch, food distribution, and food stamp programs were used

to the fullest extent.

Following President Nixon's disaster declaration, FNS Administrator Edward J. Hekman ordered initiation of emergency food stamp issuance in Rapid City, the rest of Pennington County, and Meade County.

Ralph Saxton, a food stamp program employee of the Chicago Midwest Regional FNS office, who was in Rapid City on part of a 2-week work assignment in the Dakotas, took charge of coordination. The local FNS officer-in-charge, Donald Deboer, combined disaster assistance for others with taking care of his own family, whose home and belongings were swept away by the flood.



The Salvation Army and the Red Cross helped provide USDA foods to victims in Rapid City.

Saxton met immediately with State and local authorities to set up emergency issuance at the Rapid City Central High School, a focal point for all food services. Representatives from local food stamp offices and the State Department of Public Welfare were brought in to handle certification. Approximately \$500,000 worth of stamps were flown in from Chicago for issuance.

"By 10 p.m. Sunday evening, 2 days after the flood struck, we had certified over 1,700 households, representing nearly 6,000 persons. They received more than \$161,000 worth of free coupons," Saxton said. By the end of June, 11,379 persons had received \$310,378 worth of stamps.

"Without the cooperation of the State Department of Public Welfare, Pennington County Food Stamp Certification Office, and certification officers in Sturgis and Keystone, the quick issuance of stamps would have been impossible," Saxton emphasized.

Authority for the emergency issuance was given for 30 days. At the end of this period, South Dakota Governor Richard Kneip requested an extension of 21 days of emergency authority. This allowed most of those who were initially certified to receive another month's supply of stamps.

In addition to the food stamp program, the capabilities of the food distribution and school lunch programs also were put to use.

Within a day after the flood struck, Albert Carlson, director of the food distribution program for the Midwest, was in South Dakota and by Sunday morning was working with Martin Sorenson, Director of Educational Food Services for the State Department of Public Instruction.

From Rapid City they coordinated delivery that day of 30,000 pounds of food from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. This was used at first to augment the Red Cross and Salvation Army food supplies.

Carlson and Sorenson then ordered in 80,000 pounds of food from storage points at Sioux Falls, S.D. Approximately 130,000 pounds were also brought in from Omaha, Neb., Indianapolis and Muncie, Ind., taken from supplies normally used for the school lunch and food distribution programs. These foods are always available for use in a disaster and are replaced by USDA.

Once sufficient supplies were available, they focused on setting up a mass feeding operation with the Rapid City school system and the Salvation Army.

A plan to serve hot meals was worked out—drawing on innovations in food service that have been developed to extend the scope of school feeding. Rapid City's Stevens High School was put to use as a central kitchen, where the school lunch staff prepared hot and cold pack meals.

The Salvation Army picked up the meals and delivered them to two other schools, where they were heated and served to flood victims and disaster relief crews. Residents received both lunch and dinner meals, which could be eaten at the schools or taken home.

The Salvation Army and the Red Cross also saw that the meals were delivered to disaster victims and workers at points throughout the area.

Altogether, during the 8 weeks following the flood, the hot meal program provided approximately 200,000 meals.

"This was the first time in a Midwest disaster situation we were able to put to use the technical advances made in school lunch program equipment and techniques," Carlson stated. "Having a well-trained staff and the equipment available to prepare 2,000 meals per hour in an efficient manner made the job much easier."

Suffering as a result of such a disaster cannot be understood, only felt. Ralph Saxton put it this way: "When you've lost everything, you need to be able to pick yourself up. Being able to get good meals for yourself and your family is not only an aid to survival. But it boosts a person's morale, too, and his determination to fight back against the disaster that's struck him." ☆

The Northeast Recovers from Agnes' Wrath

By Elaine Brand

MRS. JAMES G. considers herself very lucky just to be alive.

On Friday, June 23, 1972, she was at work at her office in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., when she heard over the radio that the dike was about to give way in nearby Forty Fort, where she lived with her husband and two young children.



Hurricane Agnes, inexorably pushing the Susquehanna River to the highest levels ever, was causing the worst flooding in Pennsylvania's history.

Although the radio urged people outside the immediately threatened area to remain where they were, Mrs. G. was desperate to be with her family. So she rushed home, just in time to actually see water begin to pour over the dike. As she recalls it, "with water virtually at my heels," she jumped into a car with her family and drove off. All they managed to take from the house were some blankets and pillows.

Countless families in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and other eastern States were left in situations similar to the G.'s. According to the Office of Emergency Preparedness, more than 500,000 people suffered losses in 233 counties and cities in seven States. The storm damaged or destroyed 116,000 dwellings and mobile homes as well as 2,400 farm buildings. Approximately 5,800 businesses were devastated.

In Wilkes-Barre and the surrounding area—the single hardest-hit region—perhaps 150,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes. Some were able to return shortly to undam-

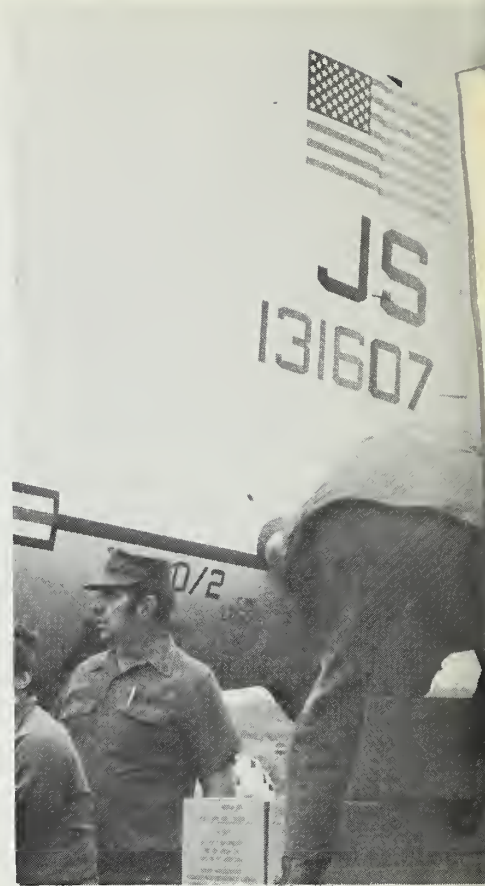
aged homes, many could stay with relatives, and a few could afford to rent hotel rooms or apartments elsewhere.

But in the days and weeks following Agnes, before the necessities of life—food, shelter, safe water, and power—could be restored in the Wilkes-Barre area, that still left a staggeringly large number of people to house and feed.

The Food and Nutrition Service estimated that during the week after the flooding, 60,000 people were being fed in greater Wilkes-Barre. The USDA emergency feeding operation was carried out in schools, churches, fire departments, community centers—in short, any place on high ground with room for people to congregate.

A typical feeding site was the one where the G. family was staying, Dallas High School in Dallas, a suburb of Wilkes-Barre. From the outside, the school was no different from numerous other modern suburban high schools in the month of June, with its huge sign proclaiming "Good luck to the class of '72." But inside, the difference was apparent.

The gym had been made over into a vast dormitory, filled with a sea of cots. It was clear that the G.'s blankets and pillows were among the





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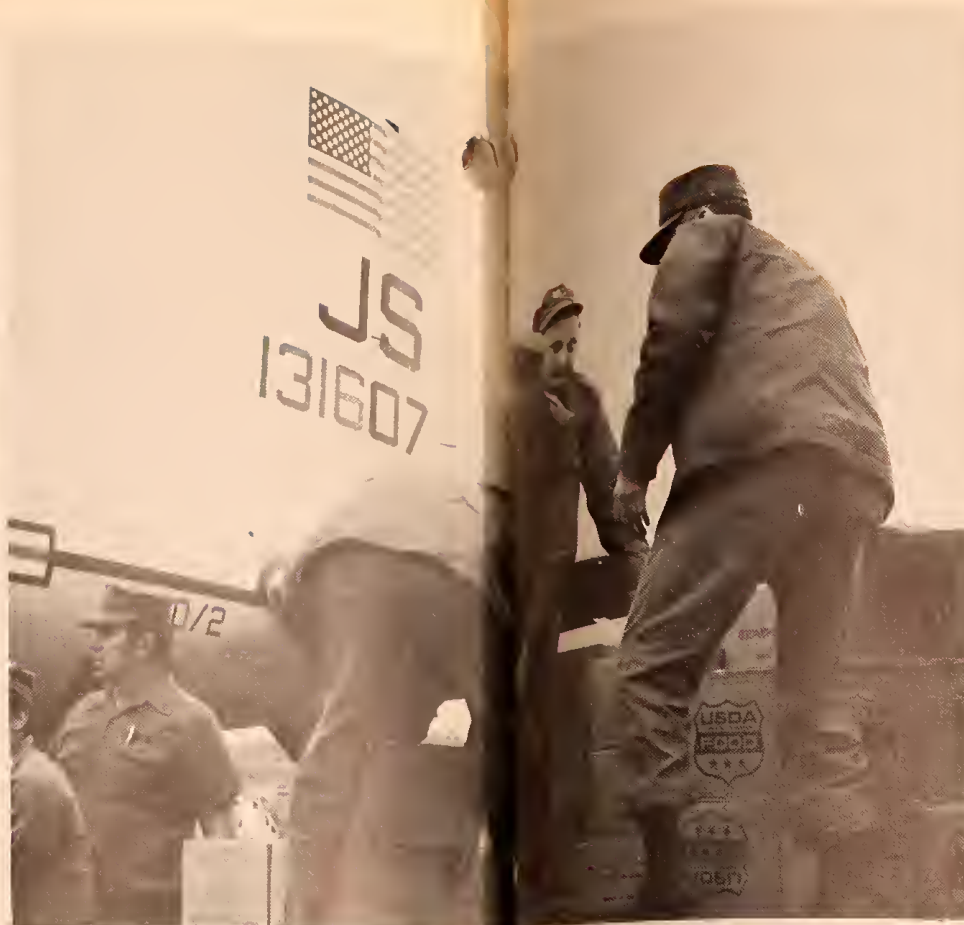
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More than 500,000 people suffered losses in 233 counties and cities in seven States along the eastern seaboard as a result of hurricane Agnes. The storm damaged or destroyed 116,000 dwellings and mobile homes as well as 2,400 farm buildings. About 5,800 businesses were devastated. Naval Reserve, Army, Coast Guard, and National Guard units were all involved in transporting over 2-1/2 million pounds of USDA foods to those left hungry.

most practical items to bring along.

The kitchen was a bustling place, where school food service personnel and volunteers were busy preparing an array of food donated by USDA, chain stores, and private companies. They were serving three meals a day, with up to 800 people receiving dinner each evening. Fewer meals were served during the daytime, when many people ventured home to inspect the damage and begin the immense job of cleaning up and restoring.

Mrs. Naomi Prynn is Food Service Director at Dallas High School. She pointed out that some stocks of USDA foods from the National School Lunch Program had been immediately available at the school. But since it was the end of the school year, these supplies were low.

When a disaster strikes, requiring emergency feedings, USDA foods can be rounded up from schools and local institutions. Another source is government-owned foods stored in commercial warehouses. Since all of Pennsylvania with the exception of two counties participates in the food stamp program, Agnes caught the State with very few food distribution program warehouses. And one of these warehouses, holding food for

schools and institutions, was located, unfortunately, in downtown Wilkes-Barre, and was under water.

Thus USDA officials and State distributing agency authorities from Massachusetts to Kentucky began working 'round-the-clock shifts to locate food and route it into Wilkes-Barre, the Elmira, N.Y., area (the second worst hit community), and other regions where the need for food would soon be desperate.

Over that first weekend, tons of food were airlifted into Wilkes-Barre from Boston. More arrived by truck convoy over the treacherous roads from Jersey City, N.J. Thousands of pounds were sent to flood victims in New York's "southern tier" of counties. Later, additional supplies poured in from Massachusetts, New Jersey, Delaware, Maine, Missouri, North Carolina, Illinois, Kentucky, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Tennessee—and all the way from Dallas, Texas.

Over 2 1/2 million pounds of USDA-donated foods reached those left hungry by Agnes in the northeastern States.

When the numbers of people and supplies are so vast, the problems of logistics and communications present a great challenge. A central command post was set up at the Naval Reserve

Station in Avoca, a town just outside Wilkes-Barre.

Naval Reserve, Army, Coast Guard, and National Guard units were all involved in transporting food. A decision was made to have it all delivered to one accessible point, the Pocono Downs Race Track, close to Wilkes-Barre. USDA officials at Avoca maintained radio contact with the race track and the numerous feeding sites, to route arriving supplies where most needed.

From Pocono Downs food was taken by helicopter, truck, station wagon, and car to feeding points where it was prepared and served.

At the Dallas High School feeding site, the G. family thought the food prepared by Mrs. Prynne and her staff was "excellent—you can't beat it." USDA foods include many items not requiring refrigeration, such as canned poultry, luncheon meat, vegetables, and fruits; instant potato flakes; and nonfat dry milk. Since the school has refrigeration, it also obtained fresh butter and cheese. The foods were transformed into hot, tempting, nutritious meals, supplemented by private donations like fresh eggs, other meats, and cartons of potato chips.

The G.'s turned out to be more fortunate than many. The Office of Emergency Preparedness reported that 350 homes in Wilkes-Barre were totally demolished, while 15,000 sustained major damage. After the waters receded, a tour showed the extent of the devastation.

Near streets of green lawns and white two-story houses—a sort of "before" picture, untouched by tragedy—stood block after block of destruction, all dyed a drab beige by mud and dust. Porches were caved in, cars overturned, and in some cases whole rooms were exposed to the street. In one bedroom a bed was still made up, with red and white sheets now hanging at a crazy angle.

In front of each house was a pile of rubble, waiting to be picked up by trucks. It took awhile to realize that each pile represented a family's total belongings.

The G.'s home in Forty Fort fared relatively well, and they were able to return to it within 2 weeks. They then became eligible to receive free food stamps.

During the week following the flood, emergency issuance of free food coupons was authorized for 47 counties in Pennsylvania and certain counties in New York, Maryland, and Virginia, and West Virginia. Any household in the designated disaster areas, with useable cooking facilities, which suffered a reduction in income or whose income was inaccessible due to the disaster, was eligible to apply. Many emergency certification offices were opened—about 18 in Wilkes-Barre—where people could be certified on-the-spot.

As more families returned home, and more grocery stores were restocked, food stamp participation expanded. By mid-July, according to the Food and Nutrition Service in New York City, 98,520 persons had signed up for free food stamps in Luzerne County, which includes Wilkes-Barre. For the entire northeast, the figure was 355,000 persons. This amounts to almost \$7 million worth of free food coupons.

Yet the distribution of USDA foods continued. As of July 31, about 18 feeding sites remained operational in the Wilkes-Barre area alone, and more than 20,000 people were still receiving meals there. Dallas High School was still feeding 200 people per day. Warren Vann, Director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Government Donated Foods, estimated that feeding on a large scale would continue at least through the end of August.

Hurricane Agnes demonstrated the worst in nature, but she tended to bring out the best in people. It will never be possible to know how many aided in the recovery operation: all the USDA people, brought into Pennsylvania and New York from throughout the northeast; the other dedicated Federal, State, and local officials, in flood areas and outside; the Red Cross and Salvation Army personnel who distributed food, clothing, and medical supplies. And the countless volunteers—perhaps 20,000 strong, mainly teen-agers and college students—who pitched in wherever they could.

Agnes destroyed a lot of property, homes, businesses, and even some lives, but she couldn't destroy the human spirit. The work of restoring and rebuilding goes on. ☆

SCHOOL LUNCH directors, chief State school officers, Child Nutrition Advisory Council members, nutritionists, researchers, and representatives of the food industry and Government exchanged ideas on school feeding in a 2½ day June conference at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng set the keynote for the conference by pointing out that this was the first time such a cross-section of people have been gathered under Federal-State sponsorship to explore the technology of child nutrition programs.

Mr. Lyng noted how dramatically the child nutrition programs have grown in recent years. Federal funding for the child feeding programs has more than doubled—from \$517 million in fiscal 1969 to \$1.2 billion in the fiscal year which closed June 30th.

A broad view of the current status and problems of child feeding was presented by Herbert D. Rorex, Child Nutrition Division Director of the Food and Nutrition Service. He explored the technical innovations being used to improve school feeding programs and to bring nonparticipating schools into a program.

Mr. Rorex emphasized the need to get children to eat school lunches when the lunch program is available. Only 55 percent of children in schools with lunch programs participate, and the number of non-needy children participating is declining.

RUTGERS Conference:

a forum for IDEAS!

Among the complex factors causing this trend, he said, is the increasing cost of school food service. One solution to this problem used by schools are technical innovations—such as “new” or “engineered” foods. While these products are entirely optional, they are enabling many schools to save money.

Another way to lower costs is making better use of USDA-donated foods, and he cited processing contracts as an extremely effective way of doing this. Improved equipment and management techniques also make food service more efficient and less costly.

Changing food habits and shifting school enrollments are other causes of declining participation. Elementary school enrollment is expected to decline, while secondary school enrollment should remain steady. Therefore, the Food and Nutrition Service is making a major effort to reach these high school youngsters, who are traditionally less interested in eating school lunches. To give children more choice in their lunches, the nutrient standard approach is being tested, as is computer-assisted menu planning.

Nutrition education is a prime factor in increasing participation, added Mr. Rorex. Participants, cooperators, and workers all need to realize the value of proper nutrition and a well-balanced lunch.

Mr. Rorex also stressed the need to balance technical innovation with human values. “Children, teachers, and parents have to know the kinds of foods the children are eating and

why. Leisurely meal times, pleasant surroundings, and attractively prepared tasty meals are often just as important to a child’s feeling of well-being as the basic nutrition itself.”

Differing opinions on the value of engineered foods were expressed in the talks of an educator and a food industry leader. Aaron Altschul, community nutrition professor at Georgetown University, praised the new foods’ potential for correcting nutritional problems. Emphasizing the advantages of fabricated foods over natural foods, Dr. Altschul said, “They are here and their progress is inevitable.”

W. B. Murphy, recently retired president of the Campbell Soup Company, termed textured protein products inferior in nutrient quality to meat, poultry, fish, milk and eggs: “They do not have the same ideal balance of essential amino acids; they do not have all of the minerals and other micro-nutrients; and they do not have the same level of nutrient availability.” These products, Mr. Murphy said, are satisfactory as protein supplements but not as protein substitutes.

The results of the Rutgers study of increasing school feeding effectiveness were given by Dr. Paul LaChance and

members of his Rutgers staff. Included were reports on their investigations of new foods and food service concepts, on varying food delivery systems and their impact on nutrition, and their experience in finding innovative ways to provide food service to schools lacking it.

Dr. Daniel Rosenfield, FNS Nutrition and Technical Services Staff Director, outlined current FNS projects and led a discussion on the implications of new foods and changing food habits on nutrition education and training.

A nationwide round-up of how processing contracts are being used to hold down school lunch costs by making greater use of USDA-donated foods was presented by Juan del Castillo, FNS Food Distribution Division Director. Ellsworth C. Reiss, coordinator of the food distribution section of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, joined Mr. Castillo with a testimonial on how effectively he is using the processing contract system in the Garden State.

FNS Administrator Edward J. Hekman, in summarizing the conference, recognized the contributions of all who had taken part. He also emphasized that the responsibility for good school feeding programs falls on the State and local directors.

“What we’re doing here,” Mr. Hekman said, “is opening a door, making new avenues available. That’s the Federal role—leadership and training, to help State and local school directors do their jobs and do them well.” ☆

lunch in a one-room schoolhouse

By June Wyman Okal

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a one-room schoolhouse in the hills of northern Vermont. One winter it was so cold that the water line into the school was frozen, and the teacher had to carry many gallons each day from his home to wash and cook with.

The 14 kids ranged from 5 to 12 years old and from first through sixth grade. They built a log cabin by the brook which gave their school its name, and some of them skied to school in the winter. One of them had to learn to drink pasteurized milk because he was so used to fresh cow's milk.

Their teacher, a young man with lots of ideas and affection, was proud of their ability to work independently. He could work with only one grade at a time. But the children

managed to learn as much or more than students in larger, better-equipped schools. What's more, they ran their own lunch program, including food buying, cooking, and book-keeping.

This school actually exists today. The Brookside School in Kirby, Vt. (population 224) is one of nine one-room elementary schools in the State (in 1948 there were 525).

Brookside is in a hilly rural area, surrounded by dairy farms. Farm animals roam over the adjacent land, and a farmhouse visible from the school's front door sports a line of white laundry waving jauntily on the front porch. "That's a Vermont thing," says Richard Holbrook of the State Department of Education. The school building itself is about a hundred years old.

When Arthur Hotz, a young teacher fresh out of Lyndonville College (near Kirby), came to teach at Brookside in November 1971, the children were bringing their lunches in pails from home. He soon noticed that the children were so hungry they would start picking at their lunch pails at 10 a.m., leaving nothing for later on. Mr. Hotz, who had supervised food service for 450 students at Lyndonville to pay his way through school, suspected that they might feel more like learning if they were well fed. So he initiated a lunch program despite great skepticism among all who knew of his plans.

An old closet was converted into a kitchenette; the sink was already there. Refrigerator-freezer, stove and cooking utensils were financed by USDA's Nonfood Assistance Program, which paid for 75 percent, and by Title I funds, administered by the Office of Education, which provided 25 percent. The school bought divided trays at a discount and each child brought his own silverware. A new freezer, also purchased with USDA assistance, fits conveniently inside the back shed.

The children, who do almost everything themselves, undertake a great deal of responsibility. They learn arithmetic by keeping the records, nutrition by planning menus, and shopping and cooking by actually taking part.

Two children cook each day. One

week the girls do the cooking and the boys do the bookwork. The following week they switch. Once a month the children plan menu around supplies, best seasonal buys, reimbursement from government funds, and their own resources. They calculate how much of each food to buy, using the regular USDA "Food Buying Guide for Type A School Lunches" (a book written for adults). Finally, they accompany Mr. Hotz to the grocery for their choices.

Parents also play a large part. They take home USDA-donated flour to bake bread and cakes for the school and often donate other homemade foods and utensils.

Since USDA-donated foods are used in every meal and parents send so much food, there's enough money for costly items like the class favorites, pork chops and ham. Says their teacher, "They're a meat and potatoes group." The children are used to quality meat because farmer-parents frequently slaughter their own animals for family meals.

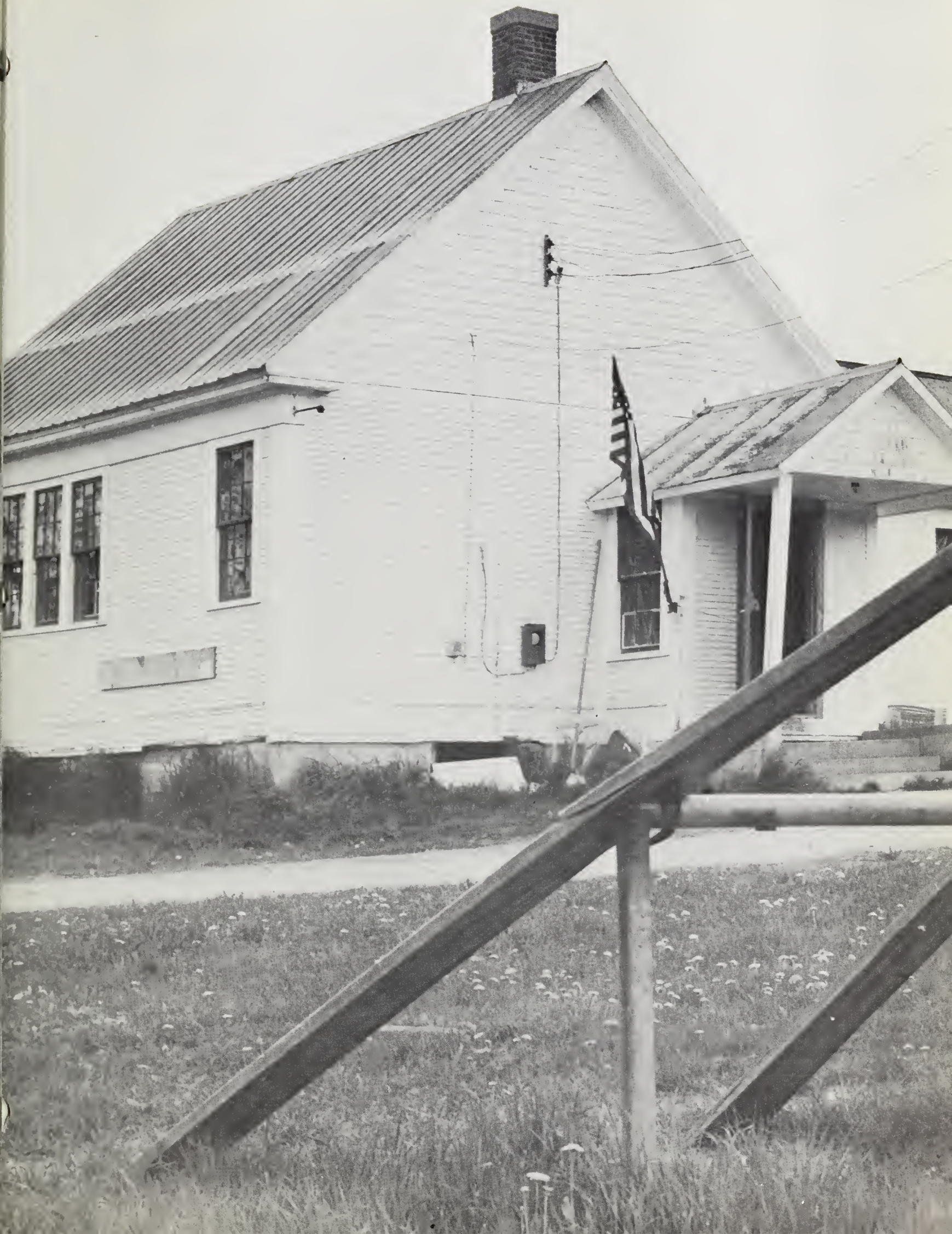
Another factor in the school's success is Mrs. Betty Donahue, Mr. Hotz's aide. Mrs. Donahue, who left New Jersey for the hills of Vermont, works part-time for \$25 a week. "Four hands are better than two," says Mr. Hotz. "She is very valuable."

On an average day Mr. Hotz sends the kids outside for morning recess at 10 a.m. while two girls, third and fourth graders, start lunch and a third gives Sean, the teacher's amiable dog, a refill on his water. The two cooks put individual ham steaks and USDA french fries in the oven, and USDA canned corn on the range. Dessert is jello (made by a mother) and USDA peaches, a class favorite.

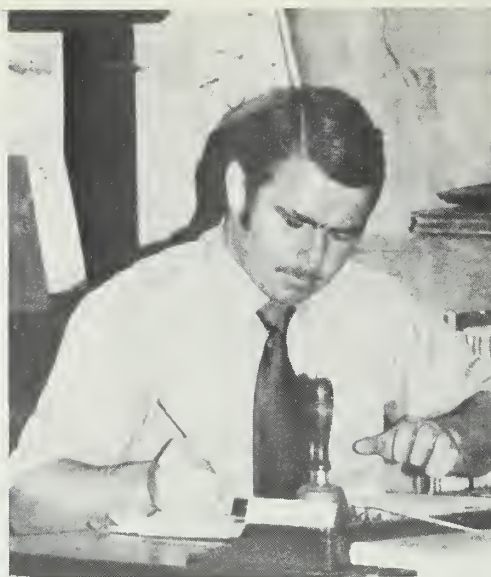
The girls, remarkably self-confident and matter-of-fact, know exactly what to do. Mr. Hotz stands by to guide them, reminding them to check the fries periodically and showing them how to put a tray in the oven without getting burned. At 10:15 the girls go outside to play baseball with the others.

Checking the food at 11 a.m., the smaller girl mixes the fries so those on the bottom won't burn.

The food is ready between 11:00 and 12. With the help of Mrs. Donahue and Mr. Hotz, each child comes



At the Brookside School in Kirby, Vermont, 14 students are the school lunch planners, shoppers, bookkeepers, cooks, and clean-up crew. With the help of their young teacher, Mr. Hotz (right), the youngsters have fun preparing nutritious lunches while learning arithmetic and nutrition.



to the kitchen to have his tray filled. The girls who did the cooking are also responsible for cleaning up pots and for feeding the school's fish.

The children finish six large cans of peaches and leave hardly any of the other foods, which will be frozen and used another day.

As each child finishes, he brings his tray and silverware to the sink and rinses them off. Mrs. Donahue washes them later.

Dick Holbrook comments, "The meals are generous; second helpings are always available for some or all of the meal. The menus and food ingredients meet or exceed the nutritional minimum requirements. Generally, the protein is 25 percent above the minimum of two ounces per child for a Type A lunch, and fruits and vegetables about 40 percent above the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup minimum."

As the children return to their schoolwork, Mr. Hotz remarks, "It's more like a family than it is a class," adding that the kids often visit him and his wife in the evening. He feels indebted to the parents for bringing up unusually self-reliant and trustworthy children. "There are no disciplinary problems. The parents have to be thanked for this." He adds that the parents are "the same mix as anywhere else," including farmers and workers in the nearby tap and die plant.

The children, he continued, work well in an open classroom situation partly because they like to come to school.

Mr. Hotz ran the school through the summer last year because he discovered that many of the kids wanted to continue. In addition to nine of his regular students, he taught three pre-schoolers each morning. He also arranged for the kids to go to camp for one week.

Asked how long Brookside will have a lunch program, he replied, "We'll do this as long as I'm here." Edward Ryan of the State Department of Education, noting this determination on the part of the teacher and children to keep it going, said, "You know, this is the kind of lunch program that really makes you believe that any and every town should be able to have a good lunch program. It's a joy to visit this little school." ☆



THE NEW LABEL LOOK

"CHANGE," SO THE expression goes, "is the only constant thing in life."

And change is precisely what the FNS Food Distribution Division did to the labels of its donated food packages to make them more meaningful to needy homemakers.

The new labels are printed in vivid colors and bold type that quickly enable the homemaker to select food from shelves. Suggestions for storing the food before and after the package is opened are included on each label to help maintain product quality and to prevent contamination.

Certain to benefit most from the redesigned labels are recipients who cannot read and those with low reading skills. For them there are stylized illustrations on the front panel of the labels that depict the type of food inside or dishes that can be prepared from the contents. And to further assist the recipients, the labels have been designed so that the color of

each illustration corresponds to the actual food color.

For the benefit of homemakers who speak Spanish only, the name of each donated food is listed on the new labels in Spanish—directly below the English name.

Also in Spanish are mixing instructions on products requiring reconstitution, such as instant nonfat dry milk, instant mashed potatoes, egg mix, and farina.

Bilingual recipes, food serving ideas, and line drawings illustrating basic food preparation steps help to round out the two-tone labels by encouraging wider use of donated foods.

Last, but not least, of the improved label features is a nutrition education symbol which represents the four food groups. The symbol is color-keyed to the illustration on each commodity, which falls into one of the "Basic Four" categories. On the label for green beans, for example,

the front-panel illustration and the square inside the symbol representing the vegetable-fruit group are both green. The message beneath the symbol reads, "Every day eat foods from each group. Green beans are in the vegetable-fruit group."

A simple explanation of each category in the four food groups—including the number of servings needed daily—appears on the new labels where space permits. By following the symbol and selecting each day from the variety of donated foods, recipients are assured of serving balanced meals.

As required by law, other information listed on the new labels are the net quantity of contents, listing of ingredients, an inspection shield for wholesomeness, and applicable statements on enrichment or fortification.

The USDA shield appears on most of the labels to certify that the donated product is "distributed in cooperation with State and local governments for Food Help Programs."

In announcing the new labels, Food Distribution Division Director Juan del Castillo explained that simplicity was the principal reason for the redesign. The old labels, he pointed out, in a number of instances were confusing to recipients with low literacy levels.

As an example, he mentioned that the old labels for canned corn and evaporated milk were a special problem because they were designed in the same color. Navajo Indians trying to identify the foods by color would open a can of milk for corn and wouldn't use it. Thus, the milk would sour resting in the sun.

"The new package labels," Mr. Castillo added, "take the guessing out of donated foods and replace it with a distinctiveness recipients can understand."

Although FNS officially distributes 24 items under the Needy Family Food Donation Program, 48 different food products will bear the new label because of a variety of fruit, meat, and vegetable products.

The new labels, which have already appeared on some foods and will soon appear on others, represent an intensified effort to increase the use of donated foods by all those who are eligible for this FNS program. ☆

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